ON THE BIRDS OF FENI AND NISSAN ISLANDS, EAST OF SOUTH NEW IRELAND

By ERNST HARTERT, Ph.D.

A. BIRDS OF FENI ISLAND.

FENI is really composed of several smaller islands, also called Anir Islands, the single islets being Ambitle, Wonneram, St. Jan, St. John or Bournand, and Babase. They are, according to Wilh. Sievers, wooded, under 4° S. lat., 152° 45′ E. long. They consist of andesite, basalt, and coralline chalk, and on Ambitle Isle is a geyser. The inhabitants are Melanesians with some Polynesian blood.

I am not aware of any birds ever having been collected on Feni.

As Feni is a small outlying island, the ornis is not very rich, though there are, as is characteristic for these island groups, 8 different pigeons, also 3 parrots and 4 kingfishers, but only 7 *Passeres*. Of the latter two have been described as new, i.e. *Monarcha cinerascens impediens* and *Cinnyris sericeus eichhorni*, and of the greatest interest is the new hawk *Accipiter eichhorni*.

The affinities of the birds are with New Ireland, most of the forms being the same as those on that island, but the presence of the true *Ducula pistrinaria*, of *Eos cardinalis*, *Hemiprocne nystacea woodfordiana*, and *Eurystomus orientalis solomonensis* show Solomon Islands influx.

1. **Megapodius duperreyi eremita** Hartl.

Full series from about the middle of May. Three eggs from May 14 measure 80 × 49, 77 × 46, and 80 × 47 mm.

2. **Anous (Megalopterus) minutus minutus** Boie.

Anous minutus Boie, *Isis* 1844, p. 188 ("Nova Hollandia").

♂ immature, Feni Island, 5.vii.1924. "Bill black, feet blackish."

These Noddies are apparently only stragglers in the Papuan seas, and those occurring there must belong to the form nesting in the Australian seas, which must be called *minutus*. In this I agree with Mr. Mathews, who first pointed this out, and if the slender-billed group, with its somewhat differently shaped tails, is separated from *Anous*, it must be called *Megalopterus*. (For me it is a subgenus.) Cf. Mathews, Nov. Zool. 1911, p. 4. B. Australia, ii, pp. 412, 417, 420.

3. **Numenius phaeopus variegatus** (Scop.).

♂ Feni Island, 16.v.1924.

This date is very late, and probably the specimen would have remained in the tropics throughout the summer. It is in much worn plumage.

4. **Tringa hypoleucos** L.

Specimens from July 4th, 9th, and 15th, in worn summer plumage.

5. **Tringa incana brevipes** (Vieill.).

Specimens shot 31.v., 2.vi., and 2.vii.1924. All four specimens in moult!

6. **Charadrius dominicus fulvus** Gm.

Common from June 5 to July. All June (and July) specimens are *moulting* body plumage and tails, but not yet the remiges.

7. **Ptilinopus superbus superbus** (Temm.).

7 specimens were obtained on Feni Island in June.

8. **Ptilinopus insolitus insolitus** Schleg.

4 adult males were obtained on Feni Island in May, June, and July.

Known to be found on New Britain, New Ireland, Duke of York group, and New Hanover. The Feni Island specimens agree with those from these islands, while on St. Mathias a smaller subspecies, *P. insolitus inferior*, occurs. The iris of the Feni specimens is described by Eichhorn as white or creamy white, the bill as pale greenish yellow, feet purplish red. Two May specimens show moult on body and tail, a July one on body.

9. **Ducula (Globicera) rubricera** (Bp.).

Evidently common on Feni Island in May and June. All specimens in moult from end of May to end of June.

10. **Ducula pistrinaria pistrinaria** (Bp.).

Carpophaga pistrinaria Bonaparte, *Consp. Gen. Av.* ii, p. 36 (1855—Solomon Islands).

8 ♂♀ ad., Feni Island, 5.v. to 14.vi.1924. "Iris dark red. Bill slaty blue. Feet cherry-red or plum-red." Nearly all specimens moult on body and tails, two also on the wings.

D. p. pistrinaria has hitherto only been recorded from the Solomon Islands, though there is a specimen from Nissan in the Berlin Museum. I was surprised to get it from Feni Island, where I should have rather expected *D. p. van-wyckii*.

The specimens from Feni agree quite with typical Solomon Islands series, though a few are a little more greenish than the rest, thus indicating an approach to *van-wyckii*. The latter is restricted to New Ireland and the neighbouring small islands, and New Britain. Dr. Dahl's theory, that *van-wyckii* was restricted to the small outlying islands, while *rhodinolaema* inhabited New Ireland, is a myth. It was discovered at Praslin Harbour, South New Ireland, and has been collected there by others (Finsch, Curtis), also on New Britain, even by Dahl; the error, on which the theory was built, arose from Reichenow naming a specimen from New Britain (Dahl coll.) *rhodinolaema*—it in fact very closely approaches *rhodinolaema*, but is all the same a brightly coloured *van-wyckii* (Stresemann in litt., and examined by myself). Dahl's theory was already attacked by Father Meyer (*Natur und Offenbarung*, 1906, p. 601). There is no doubt that they form a group of subspecies as follows:

1. *Ducula pistrinaria pistrinaria* (Bp.): Solomon Islands: Guadalcanar,

Isabel, Treasury Island, San Christoval, Vella Lavella, Choiseul, Bougainville, Nissan, and Feni Island.

This is the most greyish form, with the least amount of metallic green.

2. *Ducula pistrinaria van-wyckii* (Cass.): New Britain, Duke of York group, New Ireland (terra typica), Credner Islands, Massawa, Nusa.

This form is more metallic, but less so than *rhodinolaema*, somewhat variable; one might call it intermediate between *pistrinaria* and *rhodinolaema*.

As I said above, the idea that it was restricted to the small islands and represented by *rhodinolaema* is quite wrong. It seemed to me, however, somewhat doubtful, if Cassin's description actually referred to this form, as he describes the feathers of the upperside as " metallic golden green with violet and ferruginous shades," though the greyish ashy tinge is described on the quills. Kind information (and a feather from the back) from Dr. Richmond about the type of *van-wyckii* in the U.S. National Museum, Washington, however, set me at ease, and there can be no doubt whatever that it is what we now call *van-wyckii*, though some of the feathers are more metallic than in the majority of specimens.

3. *Ducula pistrinaria rhodinolaema* (Scl.): Manus (Admiralty Islands), New Hanover, Rook, Vulcan, and Dampier Islands, and shores of Astrolabe Bay. (A skin said to have come from Massawa must be from the Astrolabe Bay.)

Darkest, brightest, with much bronzy green, and even with purplish reflections. Wings in a large series generally 245–255, once 258, sometimes (one ♀) 235 mm.

4. *Ducula pistrinaria postrema* subsp. nov.

In colour quite like *D. p. rhodinolaema*, but wings shorter. Two Egum specimens 222 and about 240 (tip damaged), one male from St. Aignan 224, one with doubtful locality 224 mm. Type: ♂ Egum, June 1895, A. S. Meek coll.

Hab. Egum group (east of the D'Entrecasteaux Islands) and St. Aignan (Louisiade group); probably other islands as well. Cf. Nov. Zool. 1924, p. 197. The specimen in the British Museum labelled " Port Moresby " probably came from the D'Entrecasteaux group. (This form was formerly erroneously called *van-wyckii* in Nov. Zool. 1896, p. 248, and 1899, p. 213.)

11. **Gallicolumba beccarii nodifica** Hart.

See *Nov. Zool.* 1925, p. 118 !

1 ♂ ad., Feni Island, 26.vi.1924.

12. **Macropygia amboinensis carteretia** Bp.

Cf. *Nov. Zool.* 1925, p. 119.

Cf. Nov. Zool. 1925, p.119.

A full series from Feni, all collected in May. A very young female from 20.v.1924. Most specimens show some moult on body, tail, or wings.

13. **Chalcophaps stephani stephani** Rchb.

8 skins from Feni Island, August 1924, more or less in moult.

14. **Caloenas nicobarica nicobarica** (L.).

2 ♂, Feni Island, 10.vi. and 12.vi.1924, both moulting parts of body plumage.

15. **Anas superciliosa pelewensis** Hartl. & Finsch.

Cf. *Nov. Zool.* 1914, p. 283.

This smaller subspecies of *Anas superciliosa* was found not rare on Feni Island, seven adults being sent, shot May and July. Both May and July specimens show moult on tail and body.

16. **Nycticorax caledonicus mandibularis** Grant.

Cf. *Nov. Zool.* 1924, pp. 199, 200.

4 ♂♀ ad. et fere ad., 1 med., 3 juv. Feni Island end of May and June 1924. The iris of adults is described as bright or golden yellow, of the young as yellow or lemon yellow. Only two have one ornamental nuptial nuchal plume each. In one it is rufous, whitish in the middle, and black at base and tip; in the other the greater part of the right-hand web is brown and rufous, the left-hand web white with brown smudge.

17. **Dupetor flavicollis nesophilus** (Sharpe).

♂ ad., 24.vi.1924. "Iris brownish yellow. Upper bill black, lower light horn. Feet black."

♂ juv., 24.v.1924. "Iris yellow. Feet greenish black."

18. **Accipiter eichhorni** spec. nov.

Accipiter pedibus satis brevibus, cera schistacea, colore superne schistaceo, torque cervicali lato rufo-castaneo; subtus albus, pectore fasciolis plus minusve claris pallide griseis-brunneis transversis notato, interdum unicolore. Alis ♀ 233–245, ♂ 203–208, cauda ♀ 184–190, ♂ 154–158, tarsis ♀ 58–61, ♂ 51–52 mm.

Typus ♀ ad., Feni Island, 2.vi.1924. A. F. Eichhorn coll., No. 9366.

This new *Accipiter* belongs to the short-footed group, now usually placed in the genus *Astur*, which is, however, not well-defined. In coloration it closely resembles *A. albigularis* from the Solomon Islands, but the upperside is less blackish, more schistaceous, and there is a wide chestnut-rufous nuchal band, which in *A. albigularis* is usually absent, sometimes indicated, and in one male from Choiseul it is distinct, though darker, more dark chestnut, than in *A. eichhorni*. The middle toe without claw in females is 35–37 mm., in *A. albigularis* 42–44 mm. long. In males 28–30, as against 34–36 mm. The tarsus is also about 8–12 mm. shorter in *A. eichhorni*. We received only normal specimens, while of *A. albigularis* we know one from Guadalcanar with the entire underside slaty-black. The iris of *A. eichhorni* is described as deep yellow, the cere as slaty-blue, bill black, feet yellow.

This species is of the greatest interest. It has of course nothing to do with *A. rubricollis brachyurus* from New Britain, which I have carefully examined in the Liverpool Museum. It differs from *albigularis* by its shorter feet, and while it is a typical "*Astur*," as erroneously separated by many authors, *A. albigularis*, which has been placed in "*Astur*," should be an *Accipiter*. The two genera are bridged over and should not be recognised.

One might ask if *A. eichhorni* could not be a subspecies of *A. albigularis*, but we meet with the extraordinary fact that on Choiseul both *albigularis*, apparently absolutely the same as Guadalcanar specimens, and a form with shorter feet, like *A. eichhorni*, are found, but with the upperside at least as blackish

as in *albigularis*! They have no rufous collar. They were formerly united by us with *albigularis*! Of this new bird we have two adults, one quite white underneath, the other with the throat, chest, and breast blackish slate more or less mottled with greyish white. As they agree in size with males of *albigularis*, we thought they were the latter, but they are labelled as females, as are also two young; we thought at first this was an error, but there is also a young male from Choiseul, with a wing only 182, while the wings of the two young females measure nearly 200 and 215 mm. The wings of the two adult birds measure 198 and probably 200—still moulting! Moreover, the three young birds have the underside cross-barred up to the throat, while in the young of both *A. albigularis* and *A. eichhorni eichhorni* from Feni Island there are wider bars on the flanks, and more or less drop-shaped or longitudinal marks on the chest, though the former vary very much. The upperside of the short-toed Choiseul form is also

more reddish and shows more white bases to the feathers of the crown than the regularly coloured young of *albigularis*. The bill of the Choiseul females is smaller, less thick than in females, larger, longer, than in males of *A. eichhorni eichhorni*. Probably Choiseul, one of the two great northern islands of the Solomon group, has been populated by long-toed hawks from the central group (*albigularis*, unless larger series should enable us to split them up in more than one form!), and by short-toed ones from Feni Island in the north (*eichhorni*); unfortunately we have no such hawks from Bougainville, where the Feni form might occur. As, however, the short-toed birds from Choiseul differ from the Feni Island form, I propose to call them:

Accipiter eichhorni imitator subsp. nov.

Type in Tring Museum, ♀ Choiseul Island, 6.i.1904. No. A 1105. A. S. Meek coll. This is the specimen with the throat and chest slaty.

The photographs will show the difference in the feet.

19. **Haliastur indus girrenera** (Vieill.).

4 ♂♀ ad., Feni Island, May 1925. Two specimens moulting body-plumage, two show traces of black shafts on a few feathers, but all appear snow-white on head, nape, and breast.

20. **Eos cardinalis** (Gray) (or **grayi** Math. & Iredale).[1]

10 ♂♀ from Feni Island, during May. Most specimens have an indication of a yellow patch on the lower ear-coverts, like all Solomon Islands specimens, a feature not mentioned in the *Cat. B. Brit. Mus.* xx, p. 23. A male shot 21.v.1924 has a broad rich yellow stripe along the breast; its bill being partially brown indicates juvenility, but other specimens with even darker bills do not exhibit this yellow colour; it seems to me to be individual variation. The iris is described as red, reddish brown, and brown. Bill reddish yellow or yellowish red, with base of upper mandible black. Feet black. The bare skin encircling the face is black but on the chin more or less irregularly whitish (or flesh-colour), very rarely quite black, in specimens from all localities.

The occurrence of this species, peculiar to the Solomon Islands, on Feni is against the general rule that Feni has New Ireland affinities, Nissan Solomon Islands forms.

Most May specimens moult on body and tail.

21. **Trichoglossus haematodes aberrans** Rchw.

Cf. *Nov. Zool.* 1925, pp. 123, 124, where, however, I omitted to state that this form also extends to the Solomon Islands.

6 ♂♀. A ♀ shot 23.vi.1924 has a yellow bar to the breast feathers, between the grey base and the red.

22. **Lorius roratus solomonensis** (>**goodsoni**).

Cf. *Nov. Zool.* 1901, p. 82, 1924, pp. 123, 203, 1925 p. 125!

3 ♂, 5 ♀, Feni Island, May and June. These specimens are like those from New Ireland; they agree well with *L. r. solomonensis*, but the males have bills as large as *L. r. goodsoni* from Manus! Most specimens are moulting.

23. **Halcyon albicilla saurophaga** Gould.

Cf. *Nov. Zool.* 1924, p. 277.

A series from Feni, May to July. Some moulting. Longest wing barely 132 mm., often far under 130. Some Moluccan specimens are larger (to 135), others even smaller, but only a few specimens are available. One specimen has whitish edges to some of the upper wing-coverts, which is apparently a sign of young age. The colour of the back and wings varies a good deal, being sometimes more greenish, sometimes deep blue, almost purplish. Sometimes there is a trace of a collar of black spots at the black of the neck.

24. **Halcyon tristrami nusae** Heinr.

Cf. *Nov. Zool.* 1924, p. 205.

2 ♂, 2 ♀, ad., Feni Island, end June and July, all moulting. One has the sides of the body rich yellowish-brown, two a faint tinge of that colour, one is

[1] See footnote in list of Nissan birds!

white ; all four have some yellowish-brown on the sides of the chest, and the neck-band is more or less brownish-yellow. One male has buff edges to the upper wing-coverts, and this is the one with the greatest amount of yellowish-brown on the underside.

I should rather have expected *H. t. novaehiberniae* (Nov. Zool. 1925, p. 125) than *nusae* on Feni !

25. **Halcyon sancta sancta** Vig. & Horsf.

Halcyon sanctus Vigors & Horsfield, *Trans. Linn. Soc. London*, xv. p. 206 (1827—"Australia." Apparently N.S. Wales).

9 skins from Feni, May. Mostly in old plumage, but partially already moulting. Only two without dusky edges to the breast-feathers. Wings 90–93 mm. Migrant from Tasmania or Australia.

26. **Alcedo atthis pelagica** Stres.

Cf. *Nov. Zool.* 1924, pp. 203, 268, 277.

4 ♂, 4 ♀ ad., Feni Island.

27. **Merops ornatus** Lath.

Cf. *Nov. Zool.* 1924, pp. 205, 268, 277.

A series from May to July 1.

Moulting, but a male from July 1 only, still in body-moult.

28. **Eurystomus orientalis solomonensis** Sharpe.

Eurystomus solomonensis Sharpe, *Proc. Zool. Soc.* London 1890, p. 552 (Solomon Islands, type Ugi).

To my surprise this is the form from Feni Island, not *E. o. neohanoveranus*. Specimens were shot 20.v., 16.vi., and 9.vii.1924, all three in moult. The colour of the bill is variable ; one of our adult females from Feni has the bill entirely red, the other has a black tip, the third, which is not fully adult, has still most of the upper bill blackish. The white spot on the chin is well developed in one of our specimens, in the other two only indicated by one or two white feathers ; one of the latter has also a snow-white feather on the side of the lower throat.

29. **Chalcites lucidus lucidus** (Gm.).

Cf. *Nov. Zool.* 1925, p. 159.

♀, Feni Island, 26.vi.1923. "Iris dark brown. Bill black. Feet slaty blue."

A migrant from New Zealand.

30. **Hemiprocne mystacea woodfordiana** (Hart.).

Macropteryx mystacea woodfordiana Hartert, *Nov. Zool.* 1896, p. 19 (Guadalcanar).

10 specimens from Feni Island, May, June, and July, agree with our series from the Solomon Islands. Their wings measure ♂, 203–208 ; ♀, 199–210 mm. The males have the rufous spot behind the ear-coverts, the females not. Some May and June specimens show wing-moult. Some specimens have the under tail-coverts mixed with whitish, less uniform grey than in typical *woodfordiana*, but we have a Bougainville specimen which has quite as much whitish on the under tail-coverts as our Feni examples. In *H. m. aëroplanes*, which may be

said to be intermediate between *H. m. mystacea* and *woodfordiana*, the under tail-coverts are darker than *H. m. mystacea*.

31. **Monarcha cinerascens impediens** subsp. nov.

8 ♂♀, Feni Island, May and June 1924, half of them immature.

It is not without a careful comparison of all our material that I name the form of Feni (and Nissan). But, taking Mafor specimens as typical (since we have none from the Berau Peninsula), I find that the latter have larger (thicker and longer) bills, and to this larger-billed form seem to belong also the birds from Vulcan and Dampier Islands on the coast of North-East Papua.[1] Generally the abdomen in the Feni and Nissan birds is also darker, but this is not a constant character. To the form from these islands belong also those from Choiseul and the Credner Islands.

Type of *M. c. impediens*: ♂ ad., Feni Island, 19.v.1924. A. F. Eichhorn coll. No. 9275.

Evidently common on Feni Island, as 8 specimens were sent.

The distribution of the forms of *Monarcha cinerascens* is peculiar, as they inhabit chiefly small islands and coastal districts of larger ones only.

In the Berau Peninsula (Dorey, Mansinam) and along the northern coast (apparently with wide interruptions) to Huon Gulf (very rare), Vulcan and Dampier Islands. Then we find it again common on Feni and Nissan, and scarce on Choiseul, Credner, and Duke of York Islands; we also have two bad skins collected by Curtis, and said to be from New Ireland—but as these birds were not labelled, it is not improbable that they came from the Credner or Duke of York Islands. Farther south we found, on some of the Louisiade Islands the broad-billed *M. c. rosselianus*, to which seem to belong those of Trobriand and Goodenough Islands; northwards occurs the very distinct *M. cinerascens perpallidus* Neum. which we received from St. Matthias, Storm Island, and New Hanover, while according to Neumann it is found on the Portland Islands and in North New Ireland! Cf. Nov. Zool. 1915, p. 34 1918, p. 314, 1924, pp. 207, 270, Stresemann (Sepik paper), p. 95.

32. **Monarcha alecto chalybeocephalus** (Garnot).

A series of males and females from Feni Island shot in May. They are quite typical, though the bills of some of the males are rather small. Some of the specimens moult wings, tails, and body feathers, others not.

33. **Edolisoma morio remotum** Sharpe.

Nov. Zool. 1925, p. 209.

4 ♂ ad., 2 ♀ from Feni, May, June, and July 1924. These specimens seem to be inseparable from those of New Hanover and New Ireland. A specimen from May and one from June are moulting.

34. **Pachycepha pectoralis finschi** Rchw.

Cf. *Nov. Zool.* 1924, p. 209, 1925, p. 132.

4 ♂, 3 ♀, Feni Island, May 1924. These birds agree with those from New Britain, New Ireland, and New Hanover. The width of the black pectoral

[1] Papua is the name of New Guinea and is used in this sense only; to restrict this name for the British Colony in south-east New Guinea is illogical.

crescent varies very much, but not according to locality, though in the Feni Island specimens it is in all four very wide.

35. **Cinnyris jugularis flavigastra** (Gould).

Cf. *Nov. Zool.* 1925, p. 134.

A series of both sexes, all brilliantly coloured, from Feni, May 1924. Some moulting body plumage.

36. **Cinnyris sericeus eichhorni** Rothsch. & Hart., subspecies nova.

This *Cinnyris* differs from its nearest geographical ally *C. sericeus corinna* of New Ireland, by the colour of the throat, which is not steel-blue, but bluish purple, or "royal purple" of Ridgway, *Nomenclature of Colors*, 1886, pl. viii, with, of course, a metallic gloss. The crown also differs, not being glossy moss-green, but more greyish or graphite-green, and the rump is more blue, and so are the upper wing-coverts. The females are not appreciably different from those of *C. s. corinna*. The wings measure ♂ 60–61·5, ♀ 54, 54·5 mm.

C. sericeus sericeus ♂ is also very much like *C. s. eichhorni*, but the throat is much more reddish purple, the crown slightly more greenish, rump greener, bill larger, wing longer, tail longer. The other forms differ still more, as can be seen from their descriptions.

Type of *C. s. eichhorni* Rothsch. & Hart.: ♂ ad., Feni Island, 10.v.1924. A. F. Eichhorn coll. No. 9221 of the Eichhorn–Meek collections.

8 specimens of both sexes were collected in May 1924 on Feni Island.

As soon as these birds were unpacked Lord Rothschild and I noticed the difference in the colour of the throat from specimens of *C. s. corinna* which we had shortly before received from New Ireland. No *Cinnyris* was received from Nissan.

A nest with two eggs was found May 24. It is 16 cm. long, somewhat drop-shaped and fastened to the end of a bough. In one side in the upper half is a perpendicular longitudinal (not round) entrance hole, 4 cm. long and 2 wide. Over it is a protecting porch. The nest is neat, composed of fibres and bast. One of two eggs is smashed, the other is 16 × 12·5 mm. Colour white with a creamy tinge, all over with small brown spots and dots, and with a wide deep brown ring round the thicker end.

37. **Aplonis cantoroides cantoroides** (Gray).

Calornis cantorides Gray, *Proc. Zool. Soc.* London 1861, p. 341 (Misol).

8 ♂♀, Feni Island, 31.v. to 6.vi.1924. "Iris bright red. Bill and feet black."

A few show single feathers on the back moulting. Wings ♂ 100–102, ♀ 98·5–100 mm.

B. BIRDS OF NISSAN.

Nissan is a coral island, of typical horse-shoe shape. It has consequently no mountains, not rising above 60 m. (Cf. Wilh. Sievers in Meyer's *Das Deutsche Kolonialreich*, ii. p. 451.) It is also called Green Island, Sir Charles Hardy Island, or Los Caimanes, and is situated under 4½° S. lat. and 154° 20′ E. long. Like Feni, it lies east of southern New Ireland, but about 50 km. to the

south-east of Feni, and in a line with the chain of the great Solomon Islands. Being only about 27 km. long and 21 wide, its fauna is not rich, especially as it has apparently no primeval mixed forests, but is planted with *Ficus*, *Anona*, coco-nut palms, areca palms, bananas, etc. Moreover, pigs have run wild, and rats are numerous. So it is not astonishing that Eichhorn could only collect 20 or 21 resident species, all of purely Solomonian character, with a very few peculiar forms: *Ptilinopus solomonensis neumanni*, *Aplonis cantaroides longipennis*, and *Zosterops eichhorni*.

1. **Megapodius duperreyi eremita** Hartl.

A series from July and August. No difference from the birds of New Ireland, New Britain, etc. An egg from August 4 is of a rather rich colour and measures 74·5 × 44·6 mm.

2. **Tringa hypoleucos** L.

Common August 11–21. While some are in full worn breeding plumage, others are in partial winter garb, and moulting. The spotting on the breast is variable individually.

3. **Tringa incana brevipes** (Vieill.).

A female shot 20.viii.1924, plumage somewhat worn, moult only on rectrices.

4. **Charadrius dominicus fulvus** Gm.

6 ♂♀ from August, and September 8 and 14. The August specimens are moulting (body, tails, wings), but the two from September, which have *more* black feathers on the underside, do not moult; I should have expected the opposite.

5. **Ptilinopus solomonensis neumanni** subsp. nov.

Ptilinopus subspeciei P. solomonensis solomonensis dictae simillimus, sed major, colore purpurascente frontis magis extenso.

This new form is nearest to *P. sol. solomonensis*, but larger, bill and feet larger, wings of males 130–134, in *P. sol. solomonensis* 118–123 mm. The purple on the forehead is of the same colour as in *solomonensis*, not of the pale colour of *P. s. johannis*, and it extends further; in *solomonensis* it reaches to very little beyond the middle of the eye and is almost V-shaped, the purple on the crown extending only about as far as the front edge of the eye, while in *neumanni* the posterior margin is a straight line from the posterior edge of the one eye to the other. The iris is described by Eichhorn as yellow and dark yellow, the bill as slate, slaty blue, and greenish slate-colour, the feet as dark purplish red.

I name this interesting subspecies after Professor Oscar Neumann, who first called our attention to the almost unknown fauna of Nissan Island.

Type: ♂ ad., Nissan, 1.viii.1924. A. F. Eichhorn coll. No. 9485. Evidently not rare, as a series was collected.

Eight nests were found between August 5 and 18. They are flimsy structures of tendrils with a slight depression in the middle, and contain one egg each. The eggs are white with hardly any gloss, and measure 30 × 22·2, 30 × 22·5, 31 × 22·6, 32·5 × 24, 32·5 × 24, 32·7 × 22·2, 33 × 23·5, and 33·5 22·6 mm.

6. Ducula pistrinaria pistrinaria (Bp.).

See antea, p. 34.

8 ♂♀ ad. from Nissan, shot end July and August. In fine plumage, no moult, but one female from August 1 is somewhat worn and dirty and shows moult on back. Local native name: Balus.

Many nests were found in the middle of August, each containing one egg only. The eggs are smooth with hardly any or little gloss, shining through yellowish white. 19 eggs measure from 45 × 32·5, 44·5 × 32, 45·2 × 34·7, to 47 × 34·5, 47·5 × 32, 48 × 34, 48·5 × 32·6, 49 × 33·5, and 50 × 34, 50 × 36·5 mm.

7. Gallicolumba beccarii nodifica Hart.

Gallicolumba beccarii nodifica Hartert, *Nov. Zool.* 1925, p. 118 (New Ireland); antea, p. 35.

9 ♂♀ ad. and juv., Nissan, August and September. "Iris dark brown, bill black, feet blood-red or cherry-red." Juveniles moulting into adult plumage, adults not moulting. Wings of adult males 107–110 mm. The metallic patch on the nape is sometimes obsolete or absent. The adult female is like the male, but lacks the purple patch on the wing-coverts, the throat and chest are ashy grey, without the white lower edge and without the purplish band separating the grey from the brown abdomen. Wing 107 mm. The female from New Ireland described Nov. Zool. p. 118 is perhaps not adult. Quite young birds have dull cherry-red feet and rust-coloured tips to the feathers, or the feathers quite rust-coloured (on head and chest).

Seven nests with one egg each were found from August 12 to 18. They are flimsy small platforms of about 4 × 5 inches across, composed of tough tendrils with more or less decayed leaves and a slight depression in the middle. The eggs are white with moderate gloss, and measure 23·5 × 21·4, 26·5 × 20·5, 27 × 21, 27·5 × 20·5, 27·8 × 21·1, 29 × 20·5, and 29·5 × 21·5 mm.

8. Macropygia rufa rufocastanea Rams.

Macropygia rufo-castanea Ramsay, *Proc. Linn. Soc.* N.S. Wales, iv. p. 314 (1879—Guadalcanar, Solomon Islands).

4 ♂ ad., 1 ♀ ad., 3 juv., Nissan, August and end of July. Some specimens badly in moult.

I cannot separate these birds from typical *rufocastanea*. When I described *M. r. goodsoni* (Nov. Zool. 1924, p. 266) I compared it with *M. r. krakari* from Dampier Island (Nov. Zool. 1915, p. 28), but I have to admit that there is hardly a difference in the general coloration between *rufocastanea* and *goodsoni*; I am afraid *M. r. goodsoni* is a rather poor subspecies, differing from *M. r. rufocastanea* merely in the generally smaller bill, and sometimes darker colour of the slate-coloured spots on the lateral rectrices.

I cannot help thinking that *M. rufa rufocastanea* must also occur on New Ireland and New Britain, since a closely allied form (*M. r. krakari*) inhabits Dampier Island, since two specimens from Rook Island (Nov. Zool. 1914, p. 208) seemed to us indistinguishable (?) from *rufocastanea*, and the closely allied *goodsoni* lives on St. Matthias and Squally Islands. On the trees, from a distance, *M. r. rufocastanea* and *nigrirostris* must look alike.

9. **Chalcophaps stephani mortoni** Rams.

Chalcophaps mortoni Ramsay, *Proc. Linn. Soc. N.S. Wales*, vi. p. 725 (1881—Guadalcanar).

♂♀ ad., moulting, Nissan, 29.viii.1925.

Here again we find on Nissan the form of the Solomon Islands, while on Feni lives *C. s. stephani*, the subspecies of New Ireland!

10. **Caloenas nicobarica nicobarica** (L.).

A series from August, all showing more or less moult on body, wings, or tail. The iris is generally marked as creamy white, but in young birds with blackish green tail and in two adults as dull grey and dark grey.

11. **Nycticorax caledonicus mandibularis** Grant.

Cf. *Nov. Zool.* 1924, pp. 199, 200, and antea, p. 36.

4 ♂♀ ad., Nissan, 30.viii. and September 1924, more or less in moult. One has the worn remains of a long ornamental plume, which is entirely black; in two others they begin to grow and are entirely black as far as they are visible, about one inch long.

12. **Haliastur indus girrenera** (Vieill.).

♂ ad., Nissan, 23.viii.1924.

13. **Tyto alba delicatula** Gould.

Strix delicatulus Gould, *Proc. Zool. Soc.* "*Part* iv. 1836," p. 140 (1837—New S. Wales).

An adult male of a Barn-Owl was shot on Nissan 11.ix.1924. It seems to agree perfectly with some specimens of *T. a. delicatula* from Australia.

The occurrence is extraordinary, as we do not know Barn-Owls from the Solomon Islands, nor from New Ireland, and "*Strix aurantia*" from New Britain is very different. Possibly Barn-Owls have been overlooked on the Solomon Islands. A series from Nissan should be examined to confirm its being like typical *delicatula*!

14. **Eos cardinalis** (Gray).[1]

Lorius cardinalis Gray, *Genera B, Appendix*, p. 20 (1849—name for Hombron & Jacquinot's Lari cardinal).

10 ♂♀ Nissan, August and September. Exactly like the Feni islanders. A few moult on body.

15. **Trichoglossus haematodes aberrans** Rehw.

Cf. *Nov. Zool.* 1925, pp. 123, 124, where, however, I omitted to add that *aberrans* is also found on the Solomon Islands: Choiseul, Bougainville, San Christoval, Vella Lavella, New Georgia, Gizo, Guadalcanar, and on St. Aignan.

8 ♂ ad. from Nissan Island. Specimens agree with those from S.E. Papuan and New Ireland ones.

[1] According to Mathews & Iredale, "*Austral. Avian Record*," iii, p. 46, 1915, this bird must be called *Eos grayi* Math. & Ired., because "*Lorius cardinalis*" had been used by Gray, *Gen. B*, where a "*Lorius cardinalis* (Bodd.)" was mentioned, but Boddaert's *Psittacus cardinalis* was an *Eclectus*! It seems to me difficult to decide if this preoccupies Gray's name. The authors funnily call their change of names a "specific alteration."

16. **Charmosynopsis placentis pallidior** R. & H.

Cf. *Nov. Zool.* 1924, p. 201, 1925, p. 122.

2 ♂ ad., Nissan, September and August. One has the feathers of the forehead with red near the base, the other not; these red spots are more or less obvious in most *pallidior*, but hardly or not at all indicated in *subplacens*.

These two specimens do not moult.

17. **Halcyon albicilla saurophaga** Gould.

Cf. *Nov. Zool.* 1924, p. 277, and antea, p. 38.

A series from Nissan, July and August. Three specimens have a few blackish spots in the middle of the crown; as these specimens have no whitish edges to the upper wing-coverts (which are supposed to be a sign of being young), I don't think these black spots are due to these birds being less adult than others, but it must be an individual character.

18. **Halcyon sancta sancta** Vig. & Horsf.

Halcyon sanctus Vigors & Horsfield, *Trans. Linn. Soc. London*, xv, p. 206 (1827—"Australia." Apparently N.S. Wales; cf. Mathews, *List B. Australis*, p. 149).

9 ♂♀ July and August, not one *quite* without dusky edges to the breast-feathers. Size somewhat variable, wings 91–96, once (a female) 101 mm. *H. sancta* is a migrant from Tasmania and Australia in New Guinea and the Papuan Islands. Mostly in fine plumage, but partially still moulting.

19. **Chalcites lucidus lucidus** (Gm.).

Cf. *Nov. Zool.* 1925, p. 159.

♂ ad., Nissam, 4.ix.1924.

Migrant from New Zealand or neighbouring islands.

20. **Urodynamis taitensis** (Sparrm.).

Cuculus taitensis Sparrman, *Mus. Carlson.*, fasc. ii, No. xxxii (1787—Tahiti).

Three specimens, all three marked as females, Nissan, September 2, 9, and 15, 1924.

It is difficult or impossible to say from where these birds (which appear to be migrants, i.e. winter visitors, to the Solomon Islands) have come, and to which subspecies they belong if any can be recognized. Mathews recognizes (*Bull. B.O. Club*, xxxix, p. 24) *U. t. philetos* and *U. t. belli*, but they require confirmation. One from Nissan (No. 9644) is evidently fully adult; it is very heavily striped on the underside, upperside barred with rufous. No. 961 is in moult, the old feathers on the upperside have roundish white spots, the fresh ones rufous bars. No. 9647 is above like No. 9644, but the throat is fulvous, and the stripes on the underside are narrower. Why are some juvenile birds above spotted with fulvous, others with white? Do the fulvous spots fade into white, or are there two varieties?

21. **Collocalia esculenta esculenta** (L.).

Cf. *Nov. Zool.* 1924, p. 206, 1925, p. 128.

8 ♂♀ ad., from Nissan, July, August, September 1924.

These birds seem to agree with typical *esculenta*. They show no white on

the rump; for showing white in different degrees *C. e. tametamela* (1921) from New Britain, and *C. e. stresemanni* (1914) from Manus were described. Cf. Nov. Zool. 1924, p. 206. The specimens from Nissan have wings of 97–100 mm. In specimens from eastern New Guinea I have measured up to 110, while Grant's *C. e. maxima* has a wing of 115 mm. It is perhaps an exceptionally long-winged specimen, or is there a larger subspecies in East and Central New Guinea? The amount of white on the lateral rectrices is variable and sometimes absent.

22. **Monarcha cinerascens impediens** Hart.

Antea, p. 40.

8 specimens, July and August 1924. Two adult August skins moult tail and wings.

23. **Zosterops** spec.? (See p. 48!)

Among a few other birds received from Dr. Thilenius at the Berlin Museum from Nissan was also one of this *Zosterops*. Reichenow believed that the type of *Zosterops longirostris* Ramsay, *Proc. Linn. Soc. New South Wales*, iii, p. 288, 1879, came from Heath Island close to North New Britain (just south of the western Gazelle Peninsula), and as the description agreed fairly well, did not hesitate in registering the bird as *Z. longirostris*, with the distribution Heath and Nissan Islands. The type of *Z. longirostris*, however, was collected by Broadbent on Heath Island near the South Cape of New Guinea, between Brumer Island and the China Strait, in quite a different zoogeographical region.

As, however, the description of *Z. longirostris* fits also the Nissan Island birds, I wrote to Sydney to lend me the type. Unfortunately the rules of the Sydney Museum did not allow to send abroad a unique type, so that I could not see the specimen! I then sent one of our skins to Sydney to compare with the type, but the answer has not yet reached me!

Eichhorn collected 8 specimens in August on Nissan.

Four nests, each with two eggs, were found on August 12th. They are suspended somewhat like the nests of the European Oriole, by the rim, usually in a fork formed by two twigs, cup-shaped, and composed of fine grasses, and sometimes a bit of moss or wool, lined with still finer grass. The eggs are very pale blue and measure 19 × 14 and 18·6 × 14, 20 × 14·6 and 20 × 14·5, 19·5 × 14·1 and 19·1 × 14, 18 × 14·1 mm.

24. **Pachycephala pectoralis dahli** Rehw.

Pachycephala melanura dahli Reichenow, *Orn. Monatsber.* 1897, p. 178 (Credner Island).

4 ♂, 4 ♀, Nissan Island, August 1925.

There is, in my opinion, no doubt that *P. p. dahli* and *P. p. finschi* are subspecies, *P. p. finschi* inhabiting the larger islands, New Britain, New Ireland, and New Hanover, while *P. p. dahli* is found on the small islands: Credner, Palikuru, Nissan (while curiously enough on Feni Mr. Eichhorn found *P. p. finschi*!), and we also had, as recorded elsewhere, a specimen from Munia (Shortland group) in the Solomon Islands. *P. p. dahli* has the upperside lighter (more yellowish, less olive), the bill somewhat thicker, and is as a rule larger than *P. p. finschi*. The female of *P. p. dahli* has the throat white (generally with a slight greyish tinge), with short brownish grey cross-bars, a more or less distinct brownish pectoral band with dusky shaft-stripes, and the abdomen and under

tail-coverts yellow. Upperside grecnish olive, crown dark greyish. The female of *P. p. finschi* has the throat light brownish buff without distinct cross-bars, only more or less distinct distal dark fringes to the feathers, the breast-band darker, more rufous-brown, the abdomen brownish yellow, upperside much more brownish olive, crown brownish grey. Wings of *P. p. finschi* ♂ 86–90, exceptionally over 90, once 95, wings of *P. p. dahli* ♂ 91–95, once 90 mm.

The males of *P. p. finschi* have, as a rule, olivaceous edges to the quills, as stated in the original description, but *there are specimens that have greyish edges to the outer primaries*, thus at a first glance resembling males of *P. p. dahli*!

25. Aplonis cantoroides longipennis Neum.

Aplonis cantoroides longipennis Neumann, *Orn. Monatsber.* 1917, p. 155 (Nissan!).

Eichhorn found this bird not rare on Nissan.

This subspecies, hitherto only known from one male in Berlin, is at once recognizable by its larger size, especially larger, more massive bill and longer wings; moreover, the iris is yellow, not red! Wings ♂ 120–122 (in the type 123), ♀ 121, in otherwise adult specimens with juvenile wing only about 110 mm. "Iris yellow, bill and feet black."

Two young birds are glossless dusky black; in one the feathers of breast, abdomen, and back have subterminal dull brown cross-bars; the iris of these young birds are dull yellowish green. In young *A. c. cantoroides* the iris is also dull yellow, yellowish, cadmium, but the underside is dull white with black stripes!

Neumann mentions a specimen from Matty Island, over 400 km. west of Admiralty Island, with a wing of 118 mm., as possibly belonging to this subspecies, and Stresemann says that the form from Ninigo and Matty Islands is *longipennis*! Considering that on all the islands of the Bismarck Archipelago, including the Admiralty Islands, this form is not known, this cannot be accepted as a fact, until we know also the young, colour of iris, and more specimens from Ninigo (Echiquier group) and Matty Islands.

It is very peculiar that this large form has developed on the small island of Nissan, while the Solomon Islands birds from Guadalcanar, Gizo, Choiseul, and Bougainville are smaller again and seem to be indistinguishable from *cantoroides*! The iris in one of our specimens is marked as "bright red," and most of them "yellowish red." Solomon birds (presumably from Guadalcanar) were called *Calornis solomonensis* by Ramsay in *Nature*, xx, p. 125 (1879), after comparison with "*Calornis cantor*," which is the bird now called *Aplonis* (*Calornis*) *chalybea chalybea*, but probably *A. cantoroides* was meant.

26. Aplonis metallica nitida (Gray).

Cf. *Nov. Zool.* 1924, p. 212; 1925, p. 135.

Common on Nissan in August 1924. Colonies of nests were found August 12 to 15. The nests hang down from the ends of boughs and are huge structures; one sent is about 14 inches long and 9 to 10 wide. From Australia Campbell describes a nest two feet long. The nest from Nissan is composed of wire-like tendrils, bast, twigs, and dry leaves. The entrance is in the lower half of the side and leads to a cup lined with pieces of dry palm-leaves. The clutches consist of 2 or 3, rarely 4 eggs. The latter are pale blue with dark

rufous and deeper-lying pale greyish mauve spots, patches, and sometimes very large splashes. Sometimes the spots are only a very few, often almost forming a ring, sometimes all over the egg. One egg is nearly white. They measure from 21 × 27, 20·5 × 28, 20 × 29, 21·7 × 28·5 to 22 × 29 mm.

The native name on Nissan is Bu-rum.

P.S.

23. **Zosterops eichhorni** subsp. (spec. ?) nov.

Zosterops rostro pallide stramineo, annulo periophthalmico albo. Superne flavo-viridis, loris flavis; subtus flavida, lateribus virescentibus; remigibus nigro-fuscis, intus albo-flavo exterius flavo-virescente marginatis, secondariis internis flavovireseentibus; rectricibus viridi-brunneis, exterius flavescente marginatis; pedibus flavescenti-schistaceis. Alis ♂ 63–65, ♀ 61·5–62, rostro 13, a basi 17·5 mm.

Type: ♂ ad. Nissan 16.viii.1924, No. 9577, Albert F. Eichhorn coll.

See anteà, p. 46 !

Kind information from Mr. W. T. Wells, Australian Museum, Sydney, N.S. Wales, reached me while the above was in print. It confirms my idea that the birds from the two Heath Islands could not very well be the same. In *Z. longirostris* the bill is much longer, measuring 17·5 mm. from the end of the feathering—in *Z. eichhorni* only 13. The breast in *longirostris* is more yellow, not so greenish, the rectrices have deep brown inner webs, in sharp contrast to the outer webs, without a green tinge, the inner secondaries have a ress greenish tinge; perhaps the feet are also darker in *longirostris*. Eichhorn records: "Iris greyish brown. Bill dark yellow or pale straw colour, mostly nearer towards the tip, feet dull slate, tinged with yellow."

I have at present not the time to review this group, so cannot definitely say where *eichhorni* should be placed. It seems to be a subspecies of *Z. longirostris* and so do *aignani* and *pallidipes* as well as one or two others with which I am not acquainted.